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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 9. Please amend Claims 1, 6, 10, 12, 16, 17, 23, and 24 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A dental wedge comprising:

an elongate body having a lower surface, a distal end, and a proximal end tapering to said distal end, said distal end defining an insertion end for inserting the interproximal area between adjacent teeth ~~and tilted upwardly relative to said lower surface wherein said distal end is engageable with at least one of the adjacent teeth when inserted into the interproximal area between the adjacent teeth~~, said elongate body having a first portion starting at said distal end, ~~and having a second portion ending at said proximal end, and an intermediate portion between said first and second portions~~, said first portion having a generally triangular-shaped cross-section, and said second portion having a generally trapezoidal-shaped cross-section and said first and second portions angled relative to said intermediate portion wherein said first and second portions are tilted upwardly relative to said lower surface of said intermediate portion.

2. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 1, wherein said distal end comprises a rounded distal end.

3. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 2, wherein said rounded distal end comprises a generally spherical distal end.

4. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 1, wherein said elongate body includes a base side and angled sides, said angled sides depending from said base side and forming said triangular-shaped cross-section and said trapezoidal-shaped cross-section, said angled sides including rounded corners with said base side to reduce trauma to tissue when said wedge is inserted between teeth.

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5. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 4, wherein said angled sides include concave portions.

6. (currently amended) The dental wedge according to Claim 1, wherein said elongate body has an outer surface, said outer surface ~~comprising~~ being formed from a compressible high friction material.

7. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 6, wherein said high friction material comprises a thermoplastic elastomer.

8. (original) The dental wedge according to Claims 1, wherein said elongate body has a curved longitudinal axis wherein said distal end is tilted upwardly relative to a center of said proximate end.

9. (cancelled)

10. (currently amended) A dental wedge comprising:

an elongate body having a distal end, a proximal end tapering to said distal end, an intermediate portion between said distal and proximal ends, and a longitudinal axis, said elongate body further having a lower surface, said distal end defining an insertion end, said elongate body having a core extending along at least a portion of said longitudinal axis, said core comprising a first material having a first hardness, said elongate body having an exterior surface formed from a second material having a second hardness, said exterior surface having a substantially uniform thickness along said longitudinal axis, and said second hardness being less than said first hardness to form a generally soft exterior surface, and said distal and proximal ends being angled with respect to said intermediate portion wherein said distal and proximal ends are tilted upward relative to said lower surface of said intermediate portion to reduce trauma to tissue when said dental wedge is inserted between teeth and wherein a medial said intermediate portion of said elongate body compresses when said wedge is inserted into an interproximal area between adjacent teeth thereby forming enlarged

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regions on either side of the teeth for abutting the teeth to reduce slippage of said wedge from between the teeth.

11. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 10, wherein said elongate body has a first portion starting at said distal end and having a second portion ending at said proximal end, said first portion having a generally triangular shaped cross-section, and said second portion having a generally trapezoidal-shaped cross-section.

12. (currently amended) The dental wedge according to Claim [[10]] 11, wherein said triangular shaped cross-section and said trapezoidal-shaped cross-section define a base side and angled sides, said angled sides depending from said base side, and at least portions of said angled sides comprising concave sides.

13. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 12, wherein said angled sides form rounded corners with said base side to reduce trauma to tissue when said wedge is inserted between teeth.

14. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 10, wherein said first material comprises a material chosen from a plastic material, a metal material, and a wood material.

15. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 10, wherein said second material comprises a thermoplastic elastomer.

16. (currently amended) The dental wedge according to Claim 10, wherein said ~~longitudinal axis is curved whereby~~ said distal end is tilted upwardly at a greater angle than said proximal end.

17. (currently amended) A dental wedge comprising:  
 an elongate body having a distal end, an intermediate portion, and a proximal end tapering to said distal end, said distal end comprising a rounded distal end and defining an insertion end, said elongate body including a base with a base side and a pair of angled

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tapered sides generally free of protuberances or indentations, said distal end and said proximal end being tilted upwardly with respect to said base wall of said intermediate portion, and said angled tapered sides being joined with said base side and forming rounded corners with said base side wherein said elongate body is free of sharp edges at said base to minimize trauma to tissue when said dental wedge is inserted between teeth.

18. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 17, wherein each of said angled tapered sides includes a concave portion.

19. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 17, wherein said elongate body includes a core and an outer surface softer than said core to reduce the trauma to tissue when said wedge is inserted between teeth.

20. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 19, wherein said outer surface comprises a material having a durometer in a range of about 20 to 90 Shore A.

21. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 20, wherein said outer surface comprises a material having a durometer in a range of about 30 to 60 Shore A.

22. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 17, wherein elongate body includes a first portion having triangular shaped cross-section and a second portion having a generally trapezoidal cross-section, said first portion extending from said distal end, and said second portion extending from said first portion to said proximal end.

23. (currently amended) The dental wedge according to Claim 17, wherein said distal end is tilted upwardly relative to said base side at a greater angle than said proximal end for engaging at least one of the teeth when the wedge is inserted into the interproximal area between the adjacent teeth.

24. (currently amended) A dental wedge comprising:

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an elongated body having a lower side with a lower surface, a distal end, a proximal end tapering to said distal end, and a longitudinal axis, said distal end comprising a rounded distal end and defining an insertion end for inserting into an interproximal area between adjacent teeth, said distal end tilted upwardly from said longitudinal axis and said lower side surface, said proximal end tilted upwardly with respect to said lower side, said elongate body including a cross-section with curved sides and at least two rounded corners, said curve sides presenting an increased area of contact with the adjacent teeth and surrounding gum tissue wherein said increased area of contact reduces slippage of said dental wedge and said rounded corners and rounded distal end reduce trauma to the tissue when said dental wedge is inserted in the interproximal area between adjacent teeth.

25. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 24, wherein said elongated body includes an exterior surface comprising a high friction material wherein said high friction material further reduces slippage of said dental wedge from between the adjacent teeth.

26. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 25, wherein said elongate body includes a core and an outer surface having a lower durometer than said core to reduce the trauma to tissue when said wedge is inserted between teeth.

27. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 24, wherein said exterior surface is generally free of protuberances and recesses.

28. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 24, wherein at least a first portion of said elongate body has a triangular-shaped cross-section.

29. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 28, wherein a second portion of said elongate body has a trapezoidal-shaped cross-section.

30. (previously presented) The dental wedge according to Claim 24, wherein each of said rounded corners has a radius of in a range of about 0.010 inches to 0.05 inches.

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31. (original) The dental wedge according to Claim 24, wherein said distal end is tilted upwardly relative to said lower surface wherein said distal end abuts at least one of the teeth when said wedge is inserted into the interproximal area between the teeth to resist pull out of the wedge.